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CHIEF EDITOR:
YU SHANSHAN
NEWS EDITOR:
HUANG DAOHEN
DESIGNER: ZHAO YAN

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Talent show finds fallen angel



Linda Cai's story has moved many since she appeared on the talent show.

CFP Photo

By Niu Chen

Cai Youmei, a 16-year-old half-British Chinese girl better known to fans as Linda, has been the center of attention since singing "He Taught Me How to Yodel" on *Chinese Dream Show*, a talent competition.

The song required rapid switches between the singer's normal voice and a falsetto.

Viewers were amazed by her young age and vocal dexterity, but more amazed by the story of her difficult life.

Rough start

Linda, whose Chinese name is Youmei, was born in Hong Kong in 1997. Her mother, Cai Guiping, was a Chongqing native who moved to Hong Kong in 1992.

Two years later, she met a British man who gave his name only as Stewen, who was then serving in the British Royal Air Force at its Hong Kong base. They dated for three years but never married.

When Cai Guiping became pregnant in 1996, Stewen suggested she get an abortion.

"I was 32 and really wanted a baby," Cai said. "I was truly in love with him and hoped that having a baby could keep him by my side."

It was wishful thinking.

Stewen signed Linda's birth certificate and left with the air force three days later. Before leaving, he said, "I won't do anything for you."

"Linda was really cute as a girl – she looked like a doll. I think there are people who would have spent hundreds of millions of yuan to adopt a girl like her," she said.

Cai Guiping decided to raise Linda on her own and asked her mother to move to Hong Kong, where she rented a booth to sell arts and crafts at the Hong Kong Exhibition Center. She also bought a house in Shenzhen, the boom town across the water.

Although they lived in different countries, Cai kept in touch with Stewen

and his mother by writing letters.

Linda started asking about her father when she was three, so Cai took her to Scotland where they met Stewen's mother and stayed at her house for two weeks.

"His mother was really glad to see Linda and even wanted to raise her," Cai said. When Stewen never showed up, Cai had no choice but to return to Hong Kong.

When Linda turned six, Cai sold her house in Shenzhen and took her to the UK for school. Cai said she expected to be able to stay with Stewen's mother, but she was refused.

They stayed in the UK for three years before moving back to Hong Kong. During that time, Cai was unable to find work. Linda attended primary school while Cai studied English in an adult education class.

Life back in Hong Kong was hard for the penniless mother and daughter.

One day, Cai faked a suicide attempt to get government support for herself and her daughter. She was sent to a mental hospital while Linda was sent to an orphanage, where she finished primary school and her first two years of junior high.

Linda was among the best students at the school, getting perfect scores in French, math, geography, history and music.

Ambiguous future

Cai and Linda now live in Chongqing. Cai, who works as an English

tutor, earns 2,000 yuan – barely enough to make ends meet.

Linda has been unable to enter school because she cannot read Chinese. "She's 15, it's impossible to start all over again," Cai said.

"I found her a private school, but it was too expensive," she said.

Linda has dropped out of school.

To continue her studies, she is taking music training at an art school. She can only afford one class and spends the rest of her time in self-study.

"I really want to go to school but we can't afford an international school right now," Linda said. "I have to study on my own but I will definitely work hard."

Cai said the TV show was a good way for Linda to practice and attract attention.

Zhou Libo, the host, cut her from the competition, saying Linda should complete school before pursuing a career in music.

Linda, for her part, seems determined to be a singer.

In her homemade music videos, Linda appears to be a carefree teenage girl who introduces herself in fluent Chinese, Cantonese and English. One would never guess her difficult beginning.

Many netizens have expressed their support on her Weibo.

"Life makes you stronger," one wrote. "We can't change our past, but we can change our future. Fight on!"

Documentary finds viewers hungry for nostalgia

By Yi Yan

Chinese cuisine has long been known for its distinct regional cuisines. However, the stories behind many dishes remained a mystery.

A new seven-episode documentary series on CCTV, *A Bite of China*, is unearthing many lost stories and providing insight into the geographical, historical and cultural reasons why China eats the way it does.

Each episode introduces a new part of food culture, including available resources and methods of preserving food.

Although it was expected to be a poor performer given its 10:30 pm time slot, the series took off after its May 22 debut, with a 30 percent increase in viewers after its first night and 2 million Weibo messages.

Taobao, the top e-commerce site, reported that the number of searches for food-related products doubled every day when the program aired.

"I can't help missing the food from my hometown when I watch it," said netizen huoxingren. "It reminds me of the food made by my mother, back when she was busy preparing the dinner for the family."

"I watched the videos online with my Chinese schoolmates," said another netizen, Aladdin, who is studying abroad. "We all started to miss the foods from our hometowns."

Videos and photos of the documentary were spread to Twitter and Facebook.

"You can't find a better discussion topic for Chinese friends than hometown cuisine," said Bernice Jiang, a local college student. "A common appreciation for Chinese food helps us bond while studying abroad," she added.

But the show offers more than a trip down memory lane.

Each episode highlights people who share stories about their culinary adventures. Each is intertwined with the greater issues of human nature, heritage and the loss of tradition.

"We wanted to help audiences appreciate the beauty of Chinese cuisines, and also to rediscover Chinese customs and their origins," said Liu Wei, the director.

This is especially apparent in the second episode, "Story of Staples." The camera zooms in on an old couple in rural Ningbo, Zhejiang Province who makes traditional rice cakes. They only see their children twice a year, because they have deserted the farm to live in the city.

"We hope the series can show the history of Chinese food, and how the last decades of rapid change are affecting families and relationships," Chen said.

The documentary also touched on recent food safety scandals.

CCTV is in negotiations to air the series abroad during the next few months.

Talent wanted

Headhunters on the rise as country grows

By Huang Daohen/Yan Yi

Multinational firms may be losing their reputation as the ideal employers for young Chinese professionals – but not for executives with global experience.

A McKinsey report estimated that China will need more than 75,000 managers with global experience during the next 10 years: it currently has no more than 5,000.

That has English headhunter Ben Leary excited.

Leary, CEO of Column Associates, arrived in the capital in 2008 after working for more than 18 years in the executive search sector, recruiting for the banking and technology firms.

"When I first came to the country, I was expecting a workforce less open to new ideas," he said.

But Chinese employees and candidates he met proved otherwise. "In reality, they are some of the most receptive people to training and development I've ever met," Leary said. "They are learning and developing."

The young industry makes the English headhunter feel like an apprentice, a familiar role he had when the American TV show *The Apprentice* was brought to the UK by the BBC.

Leary and 12 other candidates competed for a job at a British firm run by Lord Alan Sugar.

"I made it to the eighth week, and that gave me new challenges and a number of business situations," Leary said. He said the experience was similar to running a company in China – except he was being watched by millions.

Traditional way works better

Column Associates uses traditional headhunting



Ben Leary, CEO of Column Associates

Photo by Zhou Xu

methodologies rather than online advertising. However, Leary said the Internet and job boards have a place in the world of recruitment.

"A lot of companies tend to rely heavily on online job postings, databases or Internet tools like 51job.com, Zhaopin and LinkedIn to search for candidates," Leary said. But he said this limits companies to active job seekers or those who are unhappy with their current positions.

"This is a method suited for low-level recruitment: not for headhunting," he said.

Leary said it is easy to attract unhappy people – it doesn't take any skill to offer jobs to those who have none.

"What headhunters do is to source the best of the best from the market," he said. "The non-active job

seekers, those that are happily employed, are the ones that are actually doing a great job."

"Such candidates usually don't post themselves on portals. They find agents to help them," Leary said, adding that Column has expert consultants who know the industry and help multinational firms find senior executives.

"What we do is based on the knowledge of the network, of people we know in this industry. We network and we build relationships. We are talking about *guanxi* in Chinese culture," he said.

Patience and money

The first year is always a struggle for overseas entrepreneurs who start their China venture. Leary was no exception. He said it was hard

to attract the right talent for his company and his clients.

"They rely too much on technology for headhunting. The biggest challenge for me is to educate: educating my clients, educating my staff and, educating the industry," he said. "They need to know there's a better way of doing this, a more effective way."

Meanwhile, Leary also said there is a minefield of issues one can face when incorporating a company in China.

"I have started companies in the West, where the process is rather simple," he said. "But I was warned by my mentor that setting up a company in China takes two things, patience and money."

Patience has started to pay off. Column has already established relationships with a number of multinational companies.

"Head hunting is all about people, about what motivates individuals to move, and that's what I enjoy," Leary said.

"Head hunting is all about people, about what motivates individuals to move."

Dialogue

Q: Why did you name the company "Column Associates"?

If you look at a museum, there are big columns outside the front, and those columns hold the building up. They are like the foundations of the buildings. Talents, likewise, are columns to multinationals. We hope we can find the right columns for our clients.

Q: What do you think of social networks like LinkedIn? What are their disadvantages?

LinkedIn is a good way to make connections and build profiles, but it has its limitations. There should be a

human factor in recruitment, because it is people buying people, rather than people buying LinkedIn. It's about personalities. LinkedIn wouldn't tell you information about the deep appreciation of the industry – it doesn't give you a deep understanding of the key people in the market.

Q: We have Chinese companies, big and small, going out and buying companies oversea. Do you have any suggestions for them?

When you are going into a new market, you absolutely have to hire locals. You know there is a new word

called "glocal," which is global and local. Companies have to be glocal. Interviews are not easy – you have to take risks sometimes to hire the locals. That is very difficult because you have to invest a lot of time in making the people work in the way you are working, and you have to be on the ground – you have to spend a lot of time in that country.

Q: What is your plan for the future?

The company will continue to grow, continue to build, and hopefully to sell the business to a company that wants to come to China. But most importantly we have to support the multinational companies that we already have.



Service to be next big thing

By Huang Daohen

Soaring demand for Chinese goods across the globe has made the country the world's second largest economy during the last decade, but that growth is being shaken by external jitters.

The country is looking to its service sector for continued growth, and is hosting its first fair for the service trade in the capital from May 28 to June 1.

The Beijing International Fair of Trade, similar to the Canton Fair, is expected to be the world's top transaction platform for trade in services, Premier Wen Jiabao said at the fair's opening ceremony Monday.

"Fostering growth in the service sector is the next direction to transform and restructure the country's economy," Wen said.

The premier also called for further opening of the service sector and encouraged domestic service providers to tap the world market.

The committee organizers said the fair has attracted more than 22,000 service providers from 80 countries and regions, many of whom are engaged in banking and IT.

Experts said the latest emphasis on service trade is part of the country's effort to balance its growth as exports and domestic demand slow.

China is at a crossroads in the process of globalization, said Pascal Lamy, director-general of the World Trade Organization (WTO), who attended the fair on Monday.

He said it is a great opportunity for China to develop its own service industry and transfer services and products from high quantity to high value.

"The boundary between the manufacturing and service industries has become increasingly vague, as manufacturers now combine more services with their products," Lamy said.

"There is huge potential for China's service sector," he said.

Despite a dismal trade situation, the country's trade in services began in 2011 with good momentum. The volume of service trade surged to 2.6 trillion yuan (\$410 billion) last year, according to statistics from the Ministry of Commerce.

Why are experts ignoring the rise of China?

By Bao Chengrong

Will China rule the world? Many have expressed doubt, but Martin Jacques, author of a bestseller on China issues, is firmly on the side of "yes."

At a recent Beijing book reading to celebrate his release, the second edition of *When China Rules the World*, Jacques said he wondered why people are ignoring the rise of the new global powerhouse with a closed mind.

Although three years have passed since the book's release, Jacques said he still believes China will shape the world as it continues to grow.

"I don't see any reason to change (my conclusions) because as I finished the book, its development was speeding up," he said.

However, he did make some revisions in the second edition that was published in March. He added a new chapter at the end about the world financial crisis and the possible transformation of China and the US. In addition, a two-hour interview he had with a Chinese journalist in 2009 inspired him to add fresh points on the section about the "civilization-state."

Civilization-state is one of the most important concepts in Jacques' book. He got the idea from a book written by Lucian Pye that states China is a civilization masquerading as a nation.

The word "civilization" inspired Jacques to research China's history. After extensive digging, he began to realize that it was more fitting to call China a civilization-state rather than a "nation-state."



Martin Jacques

Photo by Craig Hibbet

"The identity of Western nations has more to do with nations, because they have been nation-states for much longer," Jacques said.

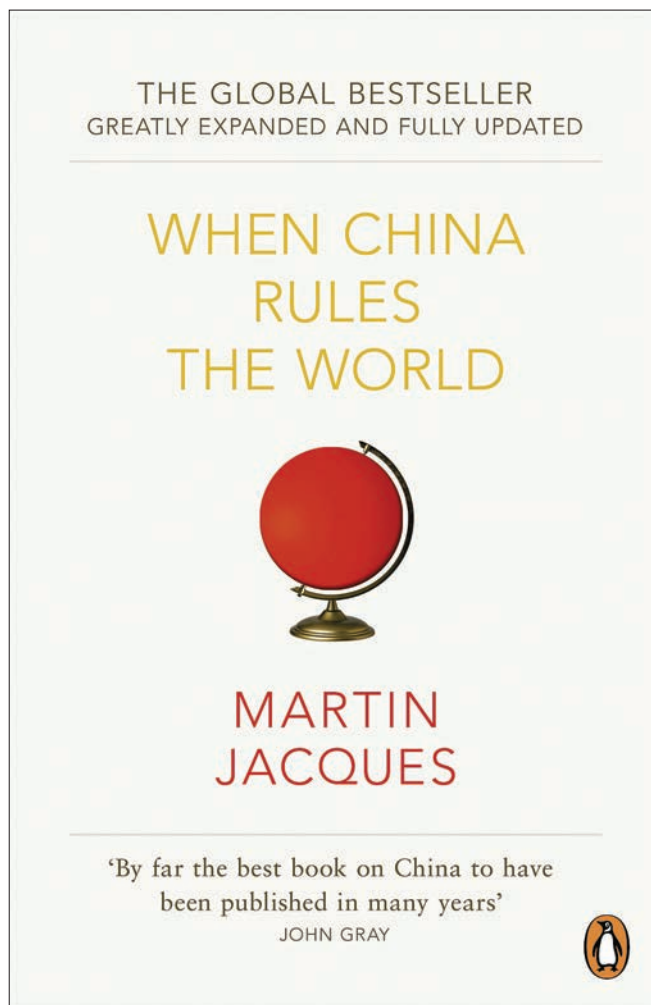
What amazed him about China's identity was the policy of "one country, two systems" in regards to Hong Kong.

According to Goldman Sachs, China will overtake the US as the world's largest economy in 2027 and double its size by 2050. Jacques said it might happen even sooner — by 2015, since the US economy is suffering a slowdown.

Nevertheless, he pointed out that the situation is more complicated than the numbers imply. China's size will mean that its citizens' standard of living will be lower compared to the US, even if it does have a larger GDP.

"In 2050, the Chinese economy will be twice the size of the US', but its living standard will be half," Jacques said.

Despite the problems, Jacques said this development will be "a significant



Martin Jacques firmly believes that China will rule the world.

moment," since the American economy has been the largest in the world for about a hundred years.

"What will happen to the IMF and World Bank? Are they going to carry on or are they going to be replaced by other things?" he asked.

Jacques, originally from the UK, became interested in China after touring southern China and Hong Kong in 1993 as a columnist at *Sunday Times* and BBC producer. In

his first two tours to Guangdong Province, he saw the incredible energy of the farmers along the road. Later, he visited quite a number of cities, such as Xi'an, Chengdu, Chongqing and Wuhan, and saw much of the same.

Two years later, he quit his job, and spurred by a friend, he began writing his book about China in 1998.

He experienced false starts along the way though. When his wife, Harinder Veriah,

died tragically in Hong Kong, Jacques said it felt like "the end of my life." She left behind a young son for Jacques to raise on his own.

There was then a lawsuit against the city's hospital authority in relation to Veriah's death. It was only in 2005 that Jacques resumed writing his book, which he completed three years later.

As a visiting professor at Tsinghua University and a former professor of Renmin University, Jacques is challenged by students all the time, which sharpens his thinking.

He has noticed that readers react differently to his book depending on where they're from. The British, he said, can't accept his view because they always focus on the negative news coming out of China. Americans are more open-minded — they may not always like what they read, but they're still curious.

People from East Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, Jacques said, completely understand his writing because they've been in close contact with China.

Chinese readers' opinions, meanwhile, differ. Many are keen to point out the country's existing problems.

These differences are reflected in the book's sales by region. It has sold very well in Hong Kong and Taiwan, but not so well in France, Spain and Japan.

Jacques said the next stop on his book tour will be India.

As for his next project, he said he wanted to write a book about the global race. China, no doubt, will be featured.

Vivacious violist debuts in Beijing

By Zhou Xu

Viola master Yuri Bashmet led the Moscow Soloists Chamber Orchestra in a performance at the National Center for the Performance Arts (NCPA) on May 24.

For its Beijing debut, the Moscow Soloists selected a number of classics, such as Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings in C major*.

"I'm very pleased that

Moscow Soloists came to Beijing, and I'm honored to be able to cooperate with China's outstanding musicians," said Bashmet, who is also the art director for the Moscow Soloists Chamber Ensemble.

Bashmet, known as the Paganini of the viola, is one of the world's most distinguished musicians. He was among the Moscow State Conservatory's top gradu-

ates, and formed the Moscow Soloists in 1992. Since, the group has given more than 1,700 concerts to audiences in over 50 countries.

Chinese pianist Chen Sa also performed, playing Bach's *Piano Concert No. 5 in F minor*.

Beijing is the first stop on the Moscow Soloists' 20th anniversary Asia tour. The next stops will be Singapore and Japan.



Yuri Bashmet
Xinhua photo

Filling a niche for fledgling Chinese multinationals

By Serena Qiu

Hyper-competition, thinning margins and overcapacity within many industries in China has spurred companies to go abroad.

Airsurf International Corporation (AIC), a US-based global marketing and media consulting giant, launched its China office Monday in Beijing. Jack Wynn, managing director of AIC China, shared his perspective on how fledgling Chinese multinational companies can fill a niche.

Beijing Today: What are the pros and cons of Chinese companies expanding overseas?

Wynn: The "going global" strategy to encourage Chinese enterprises to embrace both the domestic and overseas market represents a continuation of government policy and financial support. Meanwhile, the global financial crisis has also given Chinese enterprises a good opportunity to seek overseas expansion, with the country's relatively strong economic power and liquidity.

But it's hard for fledgling multinationals to succeed and achieve sustainable development because they lack the management and marketing



Fledgling Chinese multinational companies face challenges abroad.

skills of their foreign rivals. Plus, it's difficult to sell products under Chinese brand names, especially in developed markets, where they are often regarded as cheap, low-tech and of poor quality.

Chinese private enterprises,

especially medium and small ones, have been facing shrinking profit margins and stagnant domestic market sales. Consequently, they are trying to improve their status in the industrial chain and increase profit through overseas explo-

ration, and the momentum is likely to quicken. But in face of tough marketing process, wide differences on cultures and laws, those young and fledgling multinationals often balk at overseas expansion.

BT: What is your advice on how fledgling Chinese multinationals can overcome these difficulties?

Wynn: Different Chinese companies should take different routes when entering foreign markets. Creative, accurate and efficient marketing and media promotion are significant for building a successful brand. As for those fledgling medium and small private companies, it's better to seek professional assistance, which is proven to create maximum results with less cost.

The traditional way a middle or small Chinese manufacturer might expand overseas is by providing private-label OEM (original equipment manufacture) manufacturing for global brands. With more and more foreign companies moving their production centers to China as their export-processing hub for international markets, the OEM strategy is becoming widespread and losing its mojo.

For these companies, it's a must to conduct creative branding, effective media and event promotion. Otherwise, they cannot avoid fading away quickly from both domestic and overseas markets.

BT: What's Airsurf's specific plan in China? Do you have any potential deals here?

Wynn: We aim to partner with Chinese clients in all marketing sectors and regions to identify their highest-value opportunities, address their most critical marketing challenges and transform their businesses.

Airsurf China's six core services include marketing consulting, global media service, market research, media planning and buying, sponsorship management and international trade intelligence. With more than 25,000 news outlets globally, Airsurf global media service provides various combinational media distribution across different countries, including news release, image distribution and multimedia news release service targeting a specific industry.

As Chinese executives are clearly rolling up their sleeves for overseas action, we do have some potential deals. In order to develop business coverage and increase the influence in the international market, some Chinese industry associations such as Zhejiang Small and Middle Enterprises Association, companies from kitchenware and the medical industry have reached out to us for professional help in business consultation, overseas trademark registration, global media campaigning and branding.

British embassy invites couples to celebrate Queen's Jubilee

By Zhao Hongyi

June 5 marks the 60th anniversary, or Diamond Jubilee, of Queen Elizabeth's coronation. The British Embassy in Beijing is holding series of celebrations to commemorate the historical moment.

One of the main events is a party for the old couple on June 7.

A couple that has been married 60 years can celebrate what is called a "diamond marriage." The British embassy is inviting qualified couples to apply online and send their contacts, marriage dates and certificates, and photos to ukinchina@126.com.

Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne on February 6, 1952, but her coronation wasn't until June 5.

The Queen and her husband, the Duke of

Edinburg, will visit many places in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The royal family members will visit territories and countries abroad as well.

The major celebration, or Central Weekend, will be held from June 2 to 5, with Commonwealth nations around the world taking part.

The Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant will feature 1,000 boats assembled from across the UK and the Commonwealth.

The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh will travel in the Royal Barge, which will form the center piece of the flotilla.

Another big event will be the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Beacons.

A network of 2,012 beacons will be lit by communities and indi-

viduals throughout the UK, as well as the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and Commonwealth countries. At 8:02 pm, the Queen will light the National Beacon.

The last Diamond Jubilee celebration was held for Queen Victoria, the great-grandmother of Elizabeth.

Victoria held her Diamond Jubilee in 1897 and died in 1901. The British Empire reached its peak military under her rule.

Chinese media began reporting on the Jubilee as early as a year ago.

On May 22, Elizabeth Richard, the official stand-in for the queen, appeared in a gala in Shanghai. The event attracted great media attention and showed how popular Queen Elizabeth is in China.

Toastmasters Club offers different language training

By Liu Xiaochen

CHIC Toastmasters Club might seem like your run-of-the-mill language school, but its organizer said it can do much more than teach students English.

CHIC is very different from other English schools because this club is about improving communication, not just English, said Hubert Lin, president of CHIC Toastmasters Club.

Toastmasters is a non-profit organization established in California in 1924 to help people improve their public speaking and leadership skills.

Two years ago, Lin formed CHIC Toastmasters Club in China as a branch of the China Capital Toastmasters Club. Its themes always emphasize creativity, humor and imagination.

Lin said he founded the branch because he wanted his club to be more fun and light-hearted.

"Because CHIC has only been around for two years, it has a lot of room to grow," he said. "I want to cultivate new members and encourage them to open more clubs in small districts."

It aims to improve the English-speaking skills of its guests and members through meetings and activities.

There are currently more than 30 clubs in this city,



CHIC Toastmasters Club's spring conference in Hangzhou

Photo provided by CHIC

and several more in big cities such as Shanghai, Shenzhen and Guangzhou.

This past Wednesday, the CHIC Toastmasters Club's meeting was themed "Positive Mental Attitude."

There were 16 speaker roles, as always, with titles such as toastmaster, general evaluator, timer and grammarian.

The toastmaster was the one who ran the show – in this meeting, that role was filled by Louis Liu.

Members signed up for roles beforehand. During the meeting, they conversed according to their roles, and gave audience members the chance to join in as well.

Each speaker was given a time limit to present his

or her speech in English. Other participants then pointed out mistakes and tips for improvement.

In the end, each speech was put up for a vote, and an award was given to the best speaker, the best evaluator, the most humorous and the most improved.

CHIC holds a monthly weekend team-building event

where senior members share their experiences and secrets to leadership and speaking.

There are also two conferences every year, which provides a good chance for the clubs to interact with one another. The last was held in Hangzhou at the beginning of this year, and the next one will be in Shenyang in October.

Farewell to Punk

By Liu Xiaochen

Punk has held its final party. Despite its great location on the basement floor of the luxury hotel Opposite House in Sanlitun, the bar's owners have decided it's not financially viable.

DJ Saul Diaz, who has been at Punk since it opened four years ago, prepared a special song list for the farewell party on May 19, remixing the most popular tunes in the bar's history.

"I had a blast," said Candice Lee, a food and wine curator who's been in Beijing since 2006. "It was pretty crowded, but everyone was really enjoying the music."

The closing was a surprise to many longtime patrons, who – when visiting on weekends – would often find the place buzzing with activity.

"Since I started working here, I've never had difficulty with the people, because they get along with each other," said manager Li Nan, who has been at Punk for half a year.

Li also said besides the guests of The Opposite House, most of the others in Punk are foreigners.

"They often dress casual, not like people in suits at other clubs, which makes them feel at home. All the seats are booked tonight," Li Nan said.

As for why he was closing, Li declined say.

Some partygoers thought the reason was the noise of the bar disturbed the guests upstairs, which affected the hotel's daily operations.

Actually, there are two bars in The Opposite House.



Punk used to be a place for electronic music and dance.

CFP Photo

The other, Mesh, is relatively quiet.

Many local bars, such as Muse Bar run by Chinese actress Liu Jialing, are closing because their noise disturbs surrounding residents.

Therefore, to an extent,

the closing of Punk is not bad news, but good for more people.

Diaz took a practical view. "Things begin, things change," he said.

He has been in Beijing for 11 years and said he

expects another place to fill Punk's void.

Lee said she was surprised by Punk's closing.

"I've gone there many times and have had great times there," she said. "I'm going to miss it."

Beijing gives 721th green card to a foreigner

By Niu Chen

Beijing has granted 721 foreigners permanent residence status since China adopted the "green card" system in 2004, said authorities with the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau (PSB) on Sunday.

Among the 721, 67 were granted the status for working in the country, 265 for making outstanding contributions, 270 for family reunions, 115 for expatriation and four for investment.

Foreigners who obtain permanent residence permits can freely enter and exit China without any additional visa procedures. According to China's Ministry of Public Security, 4,752 foreigners nationwide had received permanent residence permits as of the end of 2011.

"Protecting the legitimate rights and interests of foreigners in Beijing and maintaining good public order is the Beijing police's responsibility," said Fu Zhenghua, head of Beijing's PSB. "We will provide service of equal quality for anyone living in Beijing, no matter whether he is Chinese or foreign."

Fu also said that Beijing will soon introduce a 72-hour visa-free policy for foreigners visiting the city.



A local Public Security Bureau agent is helping a foreigner.

CFP Photo

He says it is a clear sign that Beijing is becoming more open to the world.

But according to a report by *South China Morning Post*, the policy may only cover foreigners from a list of 32 countries that engage in frequent business in Beijing. Ordinary travelers may never see any benefit.

"The policy is mainly for foreigners traveling on business or those who stop in Beijing [en route to other

countries], so it would boost high-end business trips," Zhang Hui, dean of tourism at Beijing Jiaotong University, told *South China Morning Post*.

This year, the PSB will carry out a series of service initiatives for foreigners in Beijing.

- Setting up booths in communities with a high foreign population for registration.
- Providing appointment services for registration and home service of

residence permits.

- Distributing bilingual contact cards in Chinese and English.

- Distributing bilingual booklets of helpful phrases when contacting emergency service lines. Distributing *Handbook for Foreigners in Beijing*.

- Reminding foreigners of the expiration date on their visas.

- Launching a multilingual alert system.

Drivers have to pay to cross 798



CFP Photo

By Yan Yi

Since last Saturday, visitors who drive through 798 Art Zone are being charged 1.5 yuan, according to a new regulation from the park's management committee.

The committee said the fee is intended to crack down on visitors who park illegally inside the art zone.

Traffic congestion has been a long-term problem for the area, and some drivers have been driving through 798 for convenience.

The result has been increased traffic within the art zone – and dozens of letters of complaint from gallery owners.

"Cars parked on the street, or even in front of a gallery's door, leave no space for exhibitions," a gallery owner said. "Sometimes we have to call 122,

a traffic accident hotline to inform the car owner to move his car."

Xia Xiang, lawyer at the Beijing Chaifu Law Firm, said that there is no legal basis for 798 Art Zone to charge a parking fee. "Only highways and toll stations have been authorized by the government to legally charge a parking fee," he said. "798 Art Zone is not a legitimate body to collect parking fees."

"Crossing cars should not be charged since they do not occupy a parking space," Xia said, "but it's technically difficult to judge between crossing through and parking."

798 Art Zone declared earlier that it has legal permission to charge a parking fee, and it will modify its policy as necessary.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiying@ynet.com

I need to buy a bed for my 6-year-old boy, but I am worried about chemical residues on the paint. Can you recommend quality furniture stores?

You can try some imported brands like IKEA and MotherCare at Solana. You can also check out Virginia Home Furnishing, which features several American brands that are imported from the US and sold at reasonable prices (4-5 Qingong Shangye Dasha, Guanzhuang Lu, Chaoyang District).

My friend and I want to set up an IT company. He said our company should be registered in Haidian because that district has better policies for IT companies. But our business targets customers in the central business district (CBD) and I want to have an office there. Is it possible to rent a business address in Haidian and an actual address in CBD?

You're right that Haidian has better policies for IT companies. To change a company's registered address from one district to another is complex and time-consuming, since the company is required to apply with various competent authorities, such as the tax authority, finance authority, public security authority and statistics authority.

Though China's registration authority prohibits a company from carrying out operations outside its registered address, in practice, many companies have adopted such an arrangement. There are some local registration agents who can provide address services in Haidian. You can easily find their information online.

We want to throw a party for my 5-year-old son and other children in the compound. Do you know where I can get party decorations at affordable prices?

You can find ribbons, decorations, Christmas lights and balloons on the second floor of Liangmaqiao Flower Market just south of Kempinski Hotel.

(By Wei Ying)

Seeking China's



The ME:CON convention on the roof of Migas.



Closing party at Migas Lounge

electro scene

By Annie Wei

The city's youth are always looking for an excuse to party hard, and that makes outdoor music events like the Strawberry Music Festival some of the capital's most popular.

Although rock and electronic music have had a long presence in China, beginning in the 1980s, for years they have remained outside the mainstream.

Last Wednesday, Goethe Institut, a long supporter of alternative forms of music, teamed up with Metrowaves to support the local electronic music scene.

Their convention drew musicians and promoters from cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Taiwan and Chengdu, as well as some from abroad.

Origins of electro

China's electronic music scene began in the 1980s when rock icon Cui Jian sang "Nothing to My Name" (Yi Wu Suoyou) at Workers Stadium.

The country's gradual opening helped more local listeners discover rock throughout the 1990s, inspiring such famous local bands as Heibao.

As the hub of the nation's culture and music, Beijing attracted artists from all over the country, including ones who wanted to experiment.

At the same time, it attracted foreigners such as Michael Vonplon from Switzerland, the founder of Cheesebeat organized raves. Some of the most famous events included an annual rave on the Great Wall.

Still niche

But the days of raves are long gone, said Zhang Youdai, one of the first DJs active in Beijing's electronic music scene.

Today, it's all about the festivals.

Zhang said there is an ongoing gap between Chinese youth culture and the world electronic music scene.

"When we first heard rock in the 1980s, it already had a history of more than 30 years," Zhang said. China discovered electronic music when it was only a decade old.

That lag has turned many musical styles into passing fads in China, he said.

People who have lived in Beijing for a long time might remember the days of music venues like Velvet, Loft and Vogue.

"It was a great time," said Simon Xue, a 33-year-old Beijinger.

"People enjoyed going to these places for the music, as well as to dance and to chat with others. It was nothing like the current nightclub scene."

But Zhang said that scene was an illusion: the long lines of people were more interested in socializing than in the art.

That is why he kept working to spread awareness about electronic music as a radio station DJ for several decades, Zhang said.

Shen Lihui, founder of Modern Sky, a leading label for original artists and festivals like Strawberry Music Festival, has a less pessimistic view of the local electronic music scene.

"I think the biggest problem was those people (in the local electronic music scene) lacked ambition," he said.

When Modern Sky put out its first album in 1997, Shen never imagined he would be organizing performances for audiences of 100,000 or more.

Shen said China is also short on promoters who care to help electronic musicians connect with more listeners.

To enjoy music

The electronic music scene is not confined to Beijing or Shanghai: Hangzhou and Chengdu have their own music festivals, and there are many bars and clubs dedicated to spreading the sound.

But the leader of the scene is Yugong Yishan, a small bar that has hosted more than 200 electronic performances during the past eight years.

Lü Zhiqiang, the owner, said many of the local acts that started out performing for audiences of 30 have outgrown the venue.

"That makes us proud," he said.

Cafe Zarah, a small coffee shop on East Gulou Avenue, has nightly performances by local DJs.

Owner Zhang Lin said he and his friends are electronic music fans. Turning their shop into an open platform was the way they decided they could best support the art.

Sun Weitong, from Chengdu's Panda Club, said Beijing's music scene acts as a bellwether vane for most of China, but not for Chengdu.

"We're less international and don't have the steady expat audience," she said. "We hope our Panda Music Festival can help promote the culture of electronic music."



Markus M. Schneider from Metrowaves



Detlef Diederichsen from Worldtronics, Germany



Glitterbug, songwriter, producer, DJ and curator from Germany

Photos provided by
Goethe Institut China/
Metrowaves



“The film is more than a simple account of childhood in 1975. Through the director's eyes, one can relive China in the 1970s.”



A window into years of hardship

Director Wang Xiaoshuai

By Niu Chen

For director Wang Xiaoshuai, *11 Flowers* was a big gamble: one that involved mortgaging his home and his car.

Judging by its reception at the 2011 Toronto International Film Festival, the gamble paid off. The film has found critical acclaim in both France and China.

Set in a rural town in southwest China in 1975, *11 Flowers* follows the 11-year-old Wang Han as he studies painting under his father, Wang Boju, a Peking Opera performer.

One day, Wang's teacher Ms. Zhou appoints him to be the school gym leader and asks him to bring a new shirt. When Wang asks his mother, Deng Meiyu, for a shirt, she says the family cannot afford one.

Upset, Wang refuses to get up in the morning and go to school. For his first day as gym leader, he is stuck wearing his old blue jersey. To brighten his mood, Deng spends a night sewing him a new white shirt using a year's ration of cloth.

Wang treasures the new shirt but nearly loses it when playing on a riverbank. After suspecting his best friend of being a thief, the shirt turns up downriver, where it is tangled on a tree branch.

While waiting for the shirt to dry, Wang hears gunshots and sees Xue Jueqiang, a bleeding fugitive, running toward him. The man grabs his shirt and runs into the woods, promising to replace the shirt if Wang remains silent.

Xie is wanted for the murder of Chen Kunfang, a factory director who raped his sister. After escaping, he sets the factory on fire and is caught by police.

Xie keeps his promise and sends Wang a new shirt. The film ends with Xie's execution.

Wang Xiaoshuai was born in 1966 in Shanghai but spent the first 13 years in Guiyang, Guizhou Province. At the age of 15, he moved to Beijing, where he studied painting at the Central Art Academy Middle School. He went on to study directing at the Beijing Film Academy.



Wang is his school's gym leader.



Wang Han and his parents

Wang rose to fame in 2001 with the production of *Beijing Bicycle*, the winner of the Silver Bear Jury Grand Prix at the Berlin Film Festival. In 2005, *Shanghai Dreams* won the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

The idea for *11 Flowers* comes from Wang's childhood experiences. Many of Wang Han's experiences in painting, brawling and school mirror the director's own.

But the film is more than a simple account of childhood in 1975. Through Wang's eyes, one can relive China in the 1970s.

Wang's family and Xie's family represent the intellectuals living during the Third Front era. Started in the 1960s, the Third Front was

a program to develop industrial bases in the remote hinterland. Many intellectuals were from cities and worked in rural collectives, wasting their talent.

However, in spite of its critical acclaim, few viewers have seen *11 Flowers* at the cinema. The initial week of screening only brought in 3 million yuan at the box office – and this was after pushing the release date back to May 18 to avoid competing with *The Avengers*.

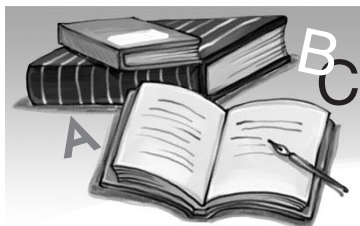
Wang has complained that theaters are purposely pushing his film to odd time slots such as 10:30 am to reserve the evening hours for Hollywood blockbusters.



Deng Meiyu is a strict but loving mother.



Wang Han and his best friends



News for kids, by kids.

No one knows better than Chinese parents how the future depends on children: most spare no effort to be “wolf dads” and “tiger moms” to send their children down the path to success.

As part of its commitment to young readers, *Beijing Today*, together with *Middle School Times* and *Beijing Children's Weekly*, is beginning a weekly education report to share the views and events happening in the lives of Chinese youth.

What are they saying?



World belongs to the tall, rich and handsome

The Internet is the top generator of neologisms, the latest of which is “gigantic loser.”

When faced with a choice between a tall, rich and handsome man and a short, poor and ugly one, women always choose the former.

“Gigantic losers” are the men who end up shunned by women and trampled on by the tall, rich and handsome.

Appearance and financial status are the modern markers of success.

Compared with the men who run the real world, the Internet seems to be a sanctuary for “gigantic losers,” because that is where the majority rules.

But even some people who could pass for tall, rich and handsome see themselves as gigantic losers.

In truth, there is no boundary between the tall, rich and handsome and the “gigantic losers” because all



CFP Photo

men, regardless of physical appearance, hope to be taller, richer and more handsome.

Everyone is dissatisfied

with his life and lusts for more power and wealth.

Whenever I hear someone talking about the “gigantic losers” who inhabit the Inter-

net, I think of the last two centuries of literature.

Today, money reigns supreme, love and idealism are dead and women are

manipulative.

I can see some similarities with the cultural atmosphere in the stories of Carmen, Anna Karenina and Madame Bovary: handsome men from good backgrounds have always dominated society.

For the “gigantic losers,” the ultimate goal is to become tall, rich and handsome while at the same time griping about the people they want to emulate. For the women, those who are pretty enough prefer to cry in the back of a BMW than smile on the back of a bicycle.

This caricature captures the difference between the lives of the elite and the lives of the majority.

And in the middle of this social disaster, the individual's real qualities – his thought and moral fiber – are completely lost.

– Yao Qian, student, Beijing No.35 Middle School
(By Liu Xiaochen)

What do they care about?



Peaceful solution ideal, but military action possible

Since the 1970s, a number of countries have occupied the small islands of South China Sea – islands which have long been a part of China.

The situation worsened this April, when the Philippines claimed Huangyan Island, also known as the Scarborough Shoal, and arrested Chinese fishermen and sent warships to defend it.

Although the Philippines expected China to send troops to retake the island, our government has attempted to find a peaceful solution.

I fully agree with this decision.

History has shown that military contest is unable to resolve such disputes.

China is in a phase of

rapid economic development, and military aggression could jeopardize this process.

In the long run, the Huangyan Island problem can only be solved by negotiation and compromise – a process that requires both sides to be calm and rational.

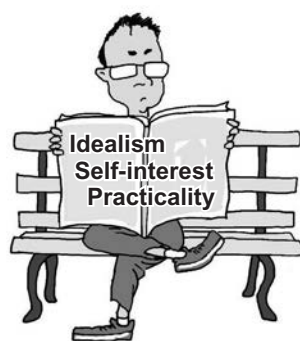
However, if the Philippines is unable to engage in a rational resolution, I would support the Chinese government in pursuing a military solution.

– Mi Yulong, student, Beijing Haidian Experimental High School

Ideals vs. self-interest?

Many professors lament that the nation's famous universities, such as Peking University, are producing “greedy gentlemen.”

Educators tell us that people should sacrifice themselves for the sake of the nation and that those who pursue material wealth and personal success should be



CFP Photo

condemned.

But I believe these two attitudes can coexist.

Are Bill Gates, Warren Buffett and Steve Jobs selfish? They have helped raise our quality of life, generated incredible wealth and contributed, both spiritually and monetarily, to the greater society.

It's unavoidable that young people pursue a course with the maximum amount of personal benefit, but that does not mean we need to erect

legal barriers to their success.

You can't demand that young people contribute to their country while ignoring the social pressures you place on them and the challenge of earning a living.

It was only after earning enough money that Bill Gates, Warren Buffet and Steve Jobs could contribute their fortunes to charity.

– Wang Jiani, reporter, Middle School News Agency

Do Chinese enterprises have a conscience?

During the last several months, news media reported how many food and drug makers have been tainting their milk and yogurt with industrial gelatins.

Although the enterprises apologized repeatedly and were fined heavily, they lost the confidence of their consumers.

I believe the companies' apologies were an attempt

at crisis management rather than sincere regret.

Medical factories reportedly saved .04 yuan on each capsule made of industrial gelatin. Milk factories who cut their milk with melamine to boost their protein levels saw similar savings.

For the companies, such dishonesty poses little risk. The fines the food and drug makers face are insignificant compared to the amount of revenue they save.

What is shameful is that these hazards were only exposed when the media became involved: the government's inspectors has absolutely no interest in seeing that the factories followed the laws and regulations created to ensure our safety.

How can anyone trust anything in such a society?

– Li Hanzhe, student, Beijing Haidian Experimental High School
(By Zhao Hongyi)

Local designs for summer needs

By Annie Wei

Summertime is often the preferred time for one- or two-week holidays, but before you set off for your trip, a little shopping may be in order. Be sure to grab a durable, light suitcases and comfortable apparel that'll be chic no matter where you go.

Re-cycling suitcases

Indie designer Wei Minghui, founder of Re-cycling, the only local brand that uses recycled materials, has released a new luggage for this season.

When Wei decided to make this series, his goal was clear: practical and functional roller suitcases.

"I use cotton and press stitches to make the case light, and a special paint to make sure the luggage is waterproof," he said. To make sure the structure is solid, orders were placed at a factory that specializes in making roller suitcases.

The unique patterns are always the brand's best selling point: each is made with recycled materials, meaning no pattern is the same. This eliminates the risk of bumping into someone who uses the same suitcase who might accidentally take it from an airport carousel.

The suitcases come in three sizes and cost 490, 590 and 690 yuan.

Re-cycling counter at Sanlitun North

Where: iMart, ground floor, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 9 pm

B.N.C.

Where: B09A, The Village North, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 9:30 pm

Tel: 6416 9045

UCCA store

Where: 4 Jiuxianqiao, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 5 pm

Tel: 5780 0215



Designer Wei Minghui's new suitcases, starting at 490 yuan

Photos provided by Neicun Zaisheji

Comfortable summer looks

A fashion show hosted by designer consignment store B.N.C. featured a few items worth owning. The sleeveless shirt and white skirt, a saintly woman's look, remains popular among the majority of young Chinese women; there's also the transparent long-skirt that emphasizes long legs; chunky and punky heels; and brightened silk shorts that are eye-catching

B.N.C.

Where: B09A, The Village North, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 9:30 pm

Tel: 6416 9045



B.N.C.'s new look



B.N.C.'s new shoe collection, starting at 2,000 yuan



Green is in.
Photos provided by B.N.C.

A market for Chaoshan food

By Annie Wei

The screening of *A Bite of China*, a documentary about Chinese cuisine, stunned audiences with its images of mouthwatering delicacies nationwide.

Many wondered: is it possible to find these dishes without leaving Beijing?

The answer is yes.

This week, *Beijing Today* scouted a small food market specializing in Chaoshan cuisine with Lam Lynn, a foodie from Shantou, Guangdong Province who currently lives in Beijing with her husband and child.

Chaoshan cuisine, also called Teochew cuisine, originated in northeastern Guangdong Province, where it was influenced by both Fujian and Cantonese styles.

Lam visits the market Xiluoyuan almost every Monday or Tuesday morning, where she buys tons of vegetables, meat and snacks shipped from Shantou.

The market, located just outside South Second Ring Road, was created because this neighborhood gathers many residents from Chaozhou and Shantou, Guangdong Province.

Lam enjoys cooking for her family. Every time she tries something delicious, she'll try to copy it. "No one knows how to select food from the market better than a housewife," she said.



Lam Lynn, food lover, visits a Chaoshan market every week.

Chaoshan Zaxian

Where: 100 meters north of Xiluoyuan Guangshun Caishichang, Fengtai District

Tel: 6722 4668

Xiluoyuan Guangshun Caishichang

Where: Shimencun 23-24, Xiluoyuan, Fengtai District

Tel: 8720 3908



This counter at the market offers delicious braised meats.



Southern cauliflowers



White eggplants



You can tell pork's quality by its fat texture.



Local watercress (left) vs. a juicer one

Photos by Shannon Lee

Braised varieties

Lam said the essence of Chaoshan food is *luwei*, which are braised meats such as geese, duck and pork. The first vendor we visited was a young man who carried all kinds of *luwei* and snacks from Shantou.

When you have guests but you don't want to cook, you can buy *luwei* and pair it with some fried vegetables.

We bought a half-baijieji (36 yuan per 500 grams), chicken boiled in consommé, a popular dish in south China that people enjoy for its tender meat and chicken flavor. However, delicious baijieji is hard to find in Beijing; it's either too expensive or the chicken comes out too plain and dry. The baijieji at Xiluoyuan is best, as the skin is thin and the meat is tender and full of flavors.

The vendor also sold a variety of handmade beef, fish and cuttlefish meatball (starting from 38 yuan for 500 grams). They are simple to prepare; add two or three when preparing a bowl of noodles to give your meal an added kick.

We also bought some salted fish (125 yuan per jar), great for people who don't cook often.

Vegetables

Lam recommends the vegetables shipped from Shantou. "The soil and water [from Shantou] are different from Beijing," she said. "The vegetables taste better."

White watercress is an example. Compared to the local green watercress, the paler variety is juicier and fresher. To judge one's quality, simply pinch its stem: fresh ones are crispy and easy to break.

Cauliflowers from the south soften after a quick boil.

White eggplants have thinner skin. "Boil it with water first, drain

it and then fry with minced garlic, adding a little bit of salt," Lam said, noting that Chaoshan cuisine is known for its moderate use of flavoring compared to other Chinese regions.

"The dish smells so good, and the eggplants are soft and delicious," she said.

Meat and fish

Lam likes cooking with wuhuarou, bacon belly pork. Lam said the pork from Xiluoyuan market was good, as they are from free-range pigs. "You can tell from the fat texture," she said. Quality pork has transparent fat while many meat vendors in Beijing sell pork injected with water.

When you buy quality pork, you can cut them into thin slices that stick onto the plate.

You can boil some water, add salt, pepper and other sauces, then put in the sliced pork and vegetables; within one or two minutes, a delicious meal is ready.

People in Shantou eat a lot of seafood. Lam prefers visiting the market herself to select the freshest instead of asking the vendors to deliver.

More Chaoshan snacks

A small grocery store 100 meters north of Xiluomen market, called Chaoshan Zaxian, also comes recommended.

"This one is run by a family from Shantou, and they really know what Chaoshan people like to eat, especially quality fish," Lam said.

The best season to buy fish is before the festivals and holiday. "They will import more rare and expensive fish species," she said.

The specialty item is Chaoshan zongzi – a triangular dumpling made of ground glutinous rice. It's cut using a white thread instead of knife and dipped in sugar powder.

Exhibition

Language of the body

Bodies, dead or alive, Chinese or foreign, are expressive. That is the message Italian curator Alessandro Rolandi hopes viewers will take away from his recent exhibition in Beijing Yishu-8 Center.

Titled *The Language of Body*, the exhibition features works by Chinese and European artists.

"It is an opportunity to bring the views about the body together, and to find out their underlying meaning from a cross-cultural viewpoint," said Christine Cayol, founder of Yishu 8.

Cayol said images of Jesus have had a huge influence on Western artworks: by contrast, Wang Wei, a professor at the Beijing Dance Academy, said the body is less emphasized in Chinese works.

Jean-Paul Desroches, curator of Guimet Museum of Paris, said the paint-



ing of the nude body was more popular among ancient Chinese artists.

The three-day exhibition includes paintings, photographs, videos and live performances.

It is the first at Beijing Yishu-8 Center since relocating from the Sino-French University on March 26.

(By Yan Yi)

Airline



British Airways' home hub T5 voted world's best airport terminal

British Airways' home hub, Terminal 5, was named the World's Best Airport Terminal by airline travelers at the World Airport Awards, held at the Passenger Terminal Expo in Vienna.

Organized by independent survey company Skytrax, the awards are based on 12 million customer surveys completed over 10 months covering 388 airports.

"Despite initial teething problems when Terminal 5 opened in 2008, it has since become a firm favorite with passengers," said Edward Plaisted of Skytrax.

"The architecture, ambiance and terminal layout were repeatedly mentioned in the feedback in the survey, as well as the extensive range of shopping and dining options in the departures area."

"It's wonderful to see Terminal 5 being recognized as the world's best airport terminal. The award really contributes to our brand promise of providing world-class customer service," Kevin McQuillan, British Airways' regional general manager, East Asia said.

Iberia's home hub, Terminal 4 at Madrid's Barajas airport, was voted the fifth best terminal in the world.

Other airport terminals featuring in the Top 5 are Singapore Changi Terminal 3, Beijing Capital Airport Terminal 3 and San Francisco International Airport Terminal



British Airways and VisitBritain host GREAT surprise party for the Diamond Jubilee

To celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee, British Airways and VisitBritain hosted a "pop up" tea party at Daning International Plaza.

A Beatles cover band provided the entertainment as British Airways staff served Twinings tea, cakes and sandwiches to more than 100 guests. The highlight of the tea party was the attendance of a Queen "look alike" who flew in especially for the event and posed for pictures with the guests.

The event was part of a British Airways' and VisitBritain's global campaign to highlight the many events taking place in Britain in 2012, as well as the attractive fares being offered by British Airways.

"2012 is a great year for visiting Britain, with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee (being) just one of the hundreds of special events that are taking place," said Travis Qian, VisitBritain country manager, China and Hong Kong.

"Heritage is one of the core factors that draws visitors to Britain and next week's celebrations will be an amazing spectacle and chance to witness Britain at its very best."

(By Zhang Nan)

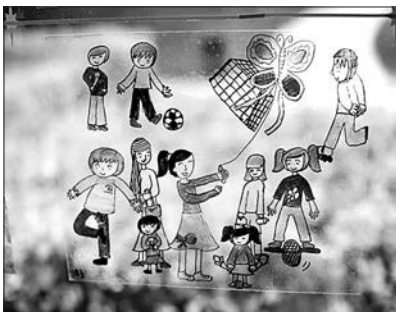
Hotel

Xiang junior celebrates anniversary with fun

Xiang Junior at Shangri-La Hotel, Beijing provides children with activities, meals, a playroom and opportunities to socialize with other youngsters.

To celebrate Children's Day on June 1, Xiang Junior is inviting children to pick up their brushes and transform their imaginations into a captivating painting about "childhood fun." The awards ceremony will take place on June 1, with prizes such as family coupons for S.T.A.Y. Restaurant and Café Cha.

The anniversary of Xiang Junior also falls on June 1, and the hotel is holding a grand celebration. Children between the ages of three and 12 are welcome to join in the birth-



day celebration for Xiang Junior's mascot, Baby Bear Tong Tong.

The little guests will be invited to paint their interpretation of childhood fun on a 25-meter scroll, and *Beijing Kids* magazine will participate in the celebrations.



seven brands across Asia – The Ritz-Carlton, JW Marriott, Bulgari, Renaissance, Marriott Hotels & Resorts, Courtyard and Marriott Executive Apartments – and sees tremendous growth potential for all its luxury and mid-scale brands.

India is another exciting growth market, Cooper said. With more than 50 open and signed hotels, Marriott expects to grow to about 100 hotels in the country, including Fairfield by Marriott, which was specifically designed for India.

Marriott International continues robust growth in Asia

Marriott International announced it has reached the milestone figure of 250 open and signed hotels in Asia, with the 250th to be located in Bo'ao, China. This represents 129 open hotels plus 121 projects in the pipeline, or more than 75,000 rooms in 15 countries.

"We are delighted to have reached 250 hotels in Asia and are looking forward to continued growth in the region," said Simon Cooper, Marriott International's president and managing director, Asia Pacific.

"We are seeing growth across all countries in Asia, and in the past few weeks have signed landmark hotels in key locations including Macau, Vietnam and India," he said.

"We continue to see excellent growth in China where we now have more than 100 open and signed hotels, and expect to open, on average, one hotel a month in the country for at least the next three years."

Marriott International operates

Fri, Jun. 1

Nightlife

Escape Plan 2012 China tour

This two-day party will include a special unplugged performance on the second day.

Where: MAO Live House, 11 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: Every day until June 2, 8:30 pm

Admission: 80 yuan for June 1, 100 yuan for June 2, 160 yuan for two days

Tel: 6402 5080 or 15011557079

Back to the Age of Innocence

This performance, organized by the



group Lifetime Wharf, will celebrate Childrens Day and commemorate the lost childhoods of office workers. Five

bands will perform: DH & Chinese Hellcats, DUDE, Candy Monster, Residence A and Island Mood.

Where: Yugong Yishan Live-house, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 8 pm

Admission: 60 yuan presale, 80 yuan at door

Tel: 6404 2711

15

Next week

Sat, Jun. 2



Exhibition

Beyond Words: Photography in the New Yorker

More than 100 photographs by 65 photographers around the world are displayed in this exhibition. Most are from movie studios, galleries, recording rooms or private collections, and were taken between 1890 and 2010. Each was published in *The New Yorker* between the years 1992 and 2010.

Where: UCCA, 798 Art District, Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until June 10, 10 am – 7 pm, except Mondays

Admission: 10 yuan

Tel: 5780 0200

Nightlife

Snaplines China tour 2012

Three years go, the members of Snapline asked themselves: what would people in the future see? Out of that came the inspiration for their latest album, *Phenomena*.

Where: Yugong Yishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 60-80 yuan

Tel: 6404 2711



Sun, Jun. 3

Movie

Chinese Girl by Guo Xiaolu

The indie film *Chinese Girl*, directed by Guo Xiaolu, is about the life of a girl who lives in the countryside. The lead actress, Huang Lu, will attend the screening and answer participants' questions afterwards.

Where: UCCA, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 15 yuan (10 yuan for students, free for VIP)

Tel: 5780 0200



Mon, Jun. 4

Script Reading

Scripts written by students from the 166th Middle School of Beijing will be performed.

They include: *Love Sleeping Beauty*, *Lucky Ferris Wheel Production*, *Jane Eyre*, *Our Self-study Class* and *Farewell-Bing Xin*.

Where: Penghao Theater, 35 Dongmianhua Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: Until June 5, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80 yuan (40 for students)

Tel: 6400 6472

Exhibition

Jean Baudrillards Disappearing Techniques

Jean Baudrillard is one of the most important thinkers



in the world and has an immense influence on photography. This exhibition, organized by kaoguwang.com, features photos selected by Baudrillards wife, Marine.

Where: Art Gallery of Central Academy of Fine Art, 8 Huajiadi Nan Jie, Chaoyang District

When: Every day until June 17, 9 am – 5 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6846 2594

Tue, Jun. 5

Musical

Man of La Mancha

Man of La Mancha is a classical musical that premiered in 1965. A version of it is coming to Beijing, directed by Joseph Graves and written by Dale Wasserman, who wrote *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* with musicians Joe Darion and Mitch Leigh.

Where: Muma Theater, 31 Building B, 22 International Art Plaza, 32 Baiziwan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Every day until June 17, 7:30-9:30 pm

Admission: 50-300 yuan

Tel: 18810381206 or 4006 103 721

Public Class

Flamenco class

International award-winning dancer David Perez from Seville is teaching this Flamenco class. Perez has been invited to perform in the US, Japan, Germany and France,



among other countries.

Where: Zhongsheng Hutong, 1 Xinglong Jie, Xicheng District

When: 8:30-10 pm

Admission: Free (registration required)

Tel: 15652600608

Wed, Jun. 6



Nightlife

Six Six Six and Sons of Anarchy

Five rock bands, including Beetle Bastion, Rolling Bowling, Pirate Pistol, Los Crasher and Residence A, will perform.

Where: MAO Live House, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8:30-11:30 pm

Admission: 50 yuan (40 for presale and students)

Tel: 6402 5080 or 13811 775608

Thu, Jun. 7

Drama

Henry V by Propeller

The all-male cast of Propeller uses masks, animations and movies to bring out Shakespeare's charm.

Where: The National Grand The-



ater, 2 Xi Changan Jie, Xicheng District

When: Until June 8, 7:30-10 pm

Admission: 120-480 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Movie

Invictus

This film is directed by Clint Eastwood and stars Matt Damon and Morgan Freeman, both of whom were nominated for Academy Awards.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: Everyday until June 8, 7:30-10 pm



Admission: 120-480 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

(By Liu Xiaochen)

Harbin isn't just all ice and snow



Russian performers



Sitting by the Songhua River



The natural reserves north of the Songhua River



The beer festival is one of the biggest celebrations in Harbin

By Zhao Hongyi

Harbin, capital of Heilongjiang Province, used to be a wetland populated by cranes, fish and other wildlife.

About 150 years ago, Russian colonists began bartering with the people in the sparsely populated villages there, exchanging guns and gold for furs and daily necessities.

The city developed a strong Russian flavor. It was the first Chinese city to have a symphony, ballet, cinema and beer hall.

For the longest time, however, the city's main attraction for Chinese tourists was its ice. During the winter, it's often as cold as -30 C — people from around the mainland seem to want to go to Harbin just to experience what that feels like.

A decade ago, Harbin began promoting itself as the "Ice City," with ice sculptures, winter swimming and snow scenes.

This year, Harbin's decided to take a different approach.

It is still the Ice City, but now it's also being marketed as a "summer resort" — the perfect place to escape hot and muggy climates.

The summer is also a better time for tourists to experience the city's roots — to walk outside and see the Russian influence that are omnipresent.

Visitors can enjoy the beer festival, a trade fair, concerts and wetland tours.

The campaign, called "Charming Summer in Harbin," will begin on June

10 and end on October 10. **Harbin International Beer Festival**

In 2001, the city held its first beer festival. Today, it is one of the three largest beer festivals in China, along with the Qingdao and Dalian festivals.

Among the promoted drinks will be kvass, a non-alcoholic drink from Russia.

Programs at the festival include a carriage parade, beer-drinking competition, photography competition, exhibition of beer culture and history, and exhibition of luxury drinks and cigars.

When: June 28 — July 9

Music Season

Since Russians brought the first piano to the city more than a century ago, the first of its kind in China, residents have grown to love music. A number of famous Chinese musicians such as tenor Li Shuangjiang, soprano Yin Xiumei, folk singer Guo Song and composer Wang Luobin come from Harbin.

Forty years ago, the city held its inaugural "Music Season," which includes concerts that include styles as divergent as Chinese folk and American rock'n' roll.

When: August 6-15

Songhua River Wetland Tour Festival

Harbin is built on the southern bank of the river; to the north is a wetland.

The local government restored the wetlands years ago, making it an excellent backyard for the city.

During the festival, many tourist programs, cultural

events, arts exhibitions and sports contests will be held in the wetlands.

When: June

Tourist sites:

Central Avenue

Russians built this street in Byzantine style. The buildings here used to be occupied by Russian investors, warlords and merchants.

The street has become a pedestrian street with many old-style restaurants, hotel-sand department stores.

St. Sophia Church

Built in 1907, the church is a typical Byzantine Orthodox church with a golden dome, splendid interior decoration, crystal lamps, a huge clock tower and choir stalls. It's been a national heritage site of China since 1986.

Sun Island Scenic Spot

Harbin was famous in the early 1980s when the song "On the Sun Island" was popular.

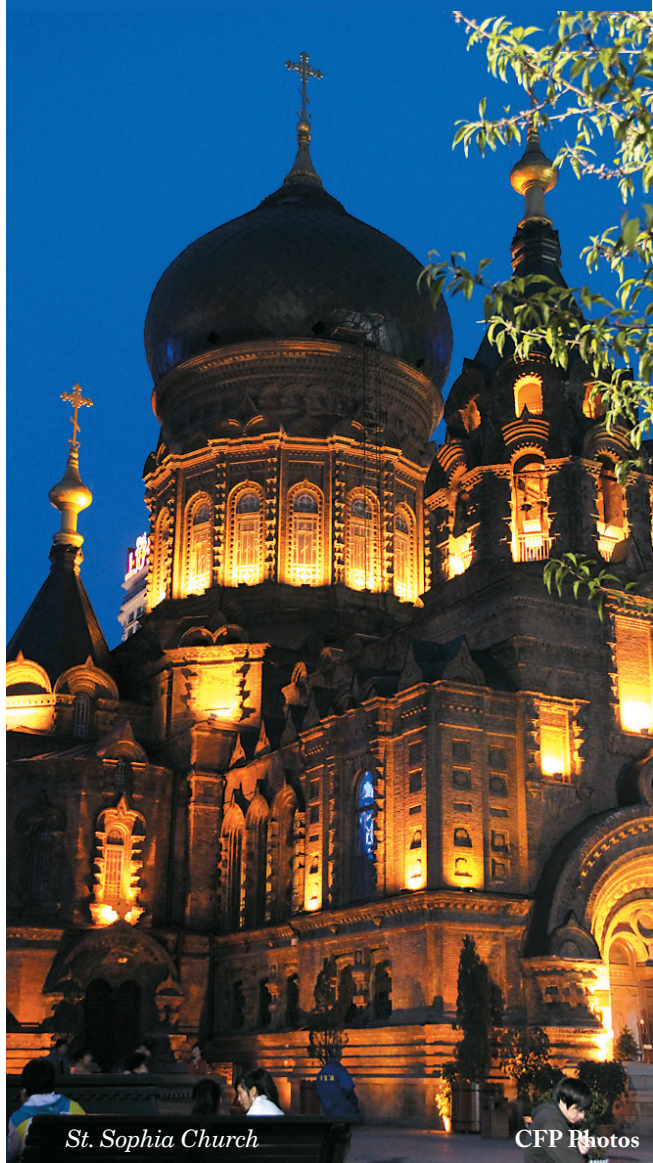
The island refers to the one that is in the middle of Songhua River, which passes through northern Harbin.

It's now a tourist destination with swimming during the summer and ice sculptures during the winter.

Siberian Tiger Park

This park was built in the 1990s. It has bred hundreds of Siberian tigers, making it the only place in China to see this mysterious animal.

The park has five sections: adult tiger park, bred tiger park, tiger cubs park, African lion park and pedestrian zone. Visitors can watch tigers from the comfort (and safety) of their cars.



St. Sophia Church

CFP Photos